



# The Malabar Farm News

A publication of the  
Malabar Farm Foundation

Spring  
2024

## Spring Updates

A number of long-term projects have been completed in time for the busy 2024 season at Malabar Farm State Park. These include both Park management plans and Malabar Farm Foundation funded projects. The first of these was the Ohio Department of Natural Resource's grand opening of its new exhibit area in the Visitor Center.



For its part the Malabar Farm Foundation has completed several long-term projects that it was pleased to support. Foremost among these was the much needed restoration and re-painting of some 80 exterior shutters on Louis Bromfield's Big House. The Jimmy Reynolds 2-section painted panel from Louis Bromfield's Study has also been repaired and cleaned. At some time in the past a serious hole had been accidentally punched into one of the panels, and over the years the edges of the pieces had been chipped and frayed. The expert staff at the non-profit Intermuseum Conservation Association (ICA) located in Cleveland, Ohio did an excellent job of repairing the damage. Cleaning of the piece also restored bright colors that were long hidden under dirt and nicotine stains. (Louis Bromfield was a heavy smoker.)



Louis Bromfield  
in his Study with  
the Jimmy Reynolds  
2-panel painting  
behind him.

ca. 1945

James "Jimmy" Reynolds was a costume and set designer on Broadway. His work there extended for 1919 to 1943. After that he began to travel, write, and paint. In addition to the above panel he designed much of the wallpaper in Malabar's Big House. Reynolds also painted a watercolor still-life that hangs in Mary Bromfield's bedroom.  
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The ICA was also able to clean, repair, and provide for the long-term preservation of the first of two original Bromfield 1940s era bedspreads in the Honeymoon Room in the Big House. This is the bedroom that was shared by Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall following their wedding at Malabar Farm on May 21, 1945.



Combined Foundation funding for the shutter project, the Reynolds panel, and the bedspread came to \$20,075.

In addition to the above projects, the Foundation recently provided \$475 to repair a Big House bathroom wall that had been damaged by a broken hot water pipe, and approved \$279 to replace 10 bluebird boxes in the Park. Last December the Foundation approved \$11,000 for the repair and painting of the three iconic cupolas on the main barn near the big House. We look forward to this work being completed sometime this spring.

In the February Newsletter it was noted that the Malabar Farm Foundation was one of the sponsors of the Johnny Appleseed Historic Byways traveling exhibit celebrating the 250th birthday of this American folk hero.



Johnny Appleseed display, Main Library, downtown Mansfield  
Mansfield-Richland County Public Libraries

The following is the current schedule for this unique display. See <http://destinationmansfield.com/appleseed-traveling-exhibit-locations> for updates

**April 26- December 31, 2024**

The Johnny Appleseed Educational Center and Museum  
518 College Way  
Urbana, OH 43078

**May 1- June 1, 2024**

City of Mansfield Municipal Building  
30 North Diamond Street  
Mansfield, OH 44902  
3rd Floor Lobby during regular business hours

**May 21, 2024**

City of Mansfield -Parks & Recreation  
Main Street - Central Park at Appleseed Historical Marker  
Mansfield, OH 44902  
Central Park Pop-Up display 11 am- 2 pm (weather permitting)

**May 31-October 6, 2024**

The Cleo Redd Fisher Museum  
203 East Main Street  
Loudonville OH 44842

**June 3-July 31, 2024**

Buckeye Imagination Museum  
175 W 3rd Street  
Mansfield, OH 44903



**July 26 & July 27, 2024**

Shiloh Area Historical Society  
18 W. Main Street  
Shiloh, OH 44878  
Shiloh Ox Roast Exhibit Open: 11 am-5 pm

**August 2- August 30, 2024**

Richland County Park District- Gorman Nature Center  
2295 Lexington Avenue  
Mansfield, OH 44906

**September 20- October 13, 2024**

The Ohio State University-Mansfield Campus  
760 University Drive  
Mansfield, OH 44906 Ph. (419) 755-4011  
call for exhibit hours

**September 28 & 29, 2024- Ohio Heritage Days**

Malabar Farm State Park  
4050 Bromfield Road  
Lucas, OH 44843 Ph: 419-892-2784  
Location - Ceely Rose House 10 am-4 pm  
Apple cider pressing demonstration -free samples

## Listening to the Past and Seeing the Future: Bromfield, Bogart, and Bacall - The Untold Stories

By Paul Sukys, Professor Emeritus  
North Central State College

In two recent columns, we reviewed several little-known facets of Louis Bromfield's career. The first involved the rediscovery of an unpublished Bromfield essay titled *Before It's Too Late – What Went Before*, which turned out to be a non-literary expression of Bromfield's philosophy of history.

The second involved two articles about Ford Maddox Ford, one written by Robert Lowell and the other by Bromfield. What was intriguing about the articles was that both Lowell and Bromfield complained extensively about Ford's shortcomings, shortcomings which, ironically, they both possessed and yet about which they seemed unaware.

Recently, several new stories have emerged about Bromfield. These stories involve Malabar Farm's most well-known visitors, Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall.

The stories are found in *Bogey and Bacall: The Surprising True Story of Hollywood's Greatest Love Affair*, written by William J. Mann and published by Harper Collins. In the book we find several stories about Bromfield, Bogart, and Bacall, that are little known and rarely discussed, even among those of us who do such "discussing" on a regular basis.



Bogie  
and  
Bacall  
at  
Malabar Farm  
May 21, 1945

Bromfield, Malabar Farm, and members of the Malabar Farm Family including George Hawkins appear in these brief but significant narratives. The first occurs in the early years of Bromfield's relationship with Bogart. During that time, Bromfield recalls that, while trying to re-establish himself on Broadway, he (Bogart) "sometimes . . . did not know where his next meal was coming from." However, during this same period, Bromfield also praises Bogart's dedication to his role as Duke Mantee in the on-stage version

of *The Petrified Forest*, when he notes that, Bogart had "sacrificed his good looks by cropping his beard so short that his head appeared to be shaved."

The second narrative occurs when we learn that, before the Bogie-Bacall wedding, Bogart visited Malabar Farm many times with his then wife, Methot Mayo. Bogart and Mayo were known to their friends as the Battling Bogarts, a reputation which they had earned because of their many public battles, usually fueled by large quantities of alcohol.

However, Mann also reports that the couple never fought when they were comfortably ensconced on the farm in Ohio. According to Bromfield, when the Battling Bogarts visited Malabar, they were as well-behaved as a minister and his wife. Apparently, Bromfield enjoyed their company so much that he repeatedly asked them to return to the farm. On one occasion he wrote, "We miss you both very much . . . everyone here sends you much love and more and more success to you both—our favorite couple."

The final narrative involves the legendary Bogie-Bacall wedding of May 21, 1945, at which Bromfield served as Bogart's best man and George Hawkins, Bromfield's good friend and business manager, served as the father-of-the-bride.

Bromfield's role is not unexpected. After all, Bogart and the Boss had been drinking buddies for years. Their relationship was the stuff of legends, and so it would have been odd to see Bromfield sitting on the sidelines during such an important event.

But what about Hawkins? Why did Bacall ask Hawkins, rather than a close relative, to give her away? The fact that her father did not attend the wedding surprised no one. Her father had, at least according to her mother, abandoned the family when Bacall was very young. Her father, of course, tells a different story, noting that the impression of abandonment was planted in his daughter's mind by her mother, his former wife.

Still, this does not explain the absence of Bacall's two uncles, Jack and Charlie, who had supported Bacall and her mother, at least in part, emotionally and financially, for many years. Mann offers several explanations for their absence from the wedding, but also admits, "there may have been other reasons too."

Finally, the most interesting, least known, and most atypical story about the Bogie-Bacall wedding, in fact, perhaps, the most unusual story about Bogart himself, came from Bacall, who, on the day of her marriage to Hollywood's ultimate tough guy, remarked after the service, "Bogie shed tears all through the ceremony . . . He cries at weddings. He's very cute about it."

Well, what do you know about that?

### Did You Know?

You can help the Malabar Farm Foundation support Malabar Farm through the Kroger Community Rewards Program. Your Kroger Plus Card can be linked to a charity so that each time you shop for groceries or get gas a percentage will be credited to the charity of your choice.

If you do not already have a Kroger Plus Card one can be obtained at the Kroger Customer Service desk. Then, go online at [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com), create an account and link your Kroger Plus Card to the Malabar Farm Foundation from the list of charities.

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#### The Malabar Farm Foundation -Contact Us-

Website - [www.malabarfarm.org](http://www.malabarfarm.org)  
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Mail - P.O. Box 551, Lucas, OH 44843



Tax deductible donations to the Malabar Farm Foundation can be made by cash, check, or credit card.

- ☐ **Member** - \$50 / year    ☐ I would like to make an additional donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Friend** - \$100 / year

**Make checks payable to:**  
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**P.O. Box 551**  
**Lucas, Ohio 44843**



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